THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, New Delhi had organized the Workshop on "The Role of Biotechnology in Agriculture" on 27th October, 2003. No recommendations were received by the Department of Agricultural Research and Education, Government of India. The National Agricultural Research System of the country is already addressing most of the concerns highlighted in the press reports about the workshop.

Production of fruits and vegetables in Uttaranchal

†369. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any specific scheme for increasing the production of fruits including apples grown in the moderate climate has been formulated for Uttaranchal; and

(b) if so, the types of assistance proposed to be provided by Government to the State, in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The Government of India has extended a Centrally-sponsored Scheme "Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in the "North Eastern States" to Uttaranchal during the year 2003-04. The Mission would address all the aspects of horticulture development in the State with an end-to-end approach for increasing the production of fruits including apples.

(b) Under the scheme, assistance will be provided, *inter alia* for production of planting materials, area expansion, transfer of technology, training, frontline demonstration, popularization of organic farming, promotion of integrated pest management, establishment of plant health clinics and tissue/leaf analysis laboratory.

Use of gas by urea producing units

†370. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme of promoting the use of gas in place of Naphtha as a fuel by urea producing units of the country;

(b) if so, the detailed outlines of the said scheme;

(c) total number of industrial units of the country under this scheme which are likely to use gas in place of Naphtha; and

(d) expenditure likely to be incurred by Government for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHHATTRA PAL SINGH): (a) to (d) The primary consideration and goal of the new pricing scheme for urea units, made effective from 1.4.2003, is to encourage efficiency parameters of international standards based on the usage of the most efficient feedstock. Natural gas (NG)/Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), being an efficient feedstock for the manufacture of urea, besides being a clean and cost effective source of energy, facilitating the switchover of the existing non-gas based urea units to NG/LNG for feedstock/fuel is being considered for Stage-III. Preliminary estimates have revealed that in case of naphtha based plants, the estimated cost of conversion would be of the order of Rs. 20-25 crore, whereas in the case of FO/LSHS based plants, such cost would be of the order of Rs. 250 crore or more depending on the scope of revamp and engineering process. The cost differences are attributable to the size, vintage, technology of the plant etc.

At present there are 14 non-gas based urea units. Their switchover to NG/LNG will depend on the availability of NG/LNG, delivered price of NG/LNG and the infrastructure available. The cost of conversion is to be financed by the respective units.

Amount paid towards insurance by IDPL.

371. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited, Hyderabad Unit, got a group saving linked insurance scheme for 4181 employees from LIC in 1988;

(b) whether the company stopped payment of LIC premium realised from the salary of employees as a result of which policy lapsed with effect from April, 1992;